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ABSTRACT

Family headship has not been systematically investigated in the sociology of the family, yet "head of the family" is a meaningful phrase to most people. A survey of adults (N=464) in Ontario revealed that only two percent of the respondents did not understand the term. Other data showed that traditional male-dominated authority patterns continued to characterize much of family life. Life events such as the death of a family member were major initiators of changes in headship; health changes also had similar effects. Passing on headship in the family often meant the loss of independence of older family members. The findings suggest that families see themselves as continuing over time, held together in a lineage unit despite separate households and progression through the life course. (JAC)

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THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY:

AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE LINEAGE

Carolyn J. Rosenthal

Department of Sociology, McMaster University
and Department of Behavioural Science,
University of Toronto

Victor W. Marshall

Department of Behavioural Science, University of
Toronto and Department of Sociology, McMaster University

Jane Synge

Department of Sociology, McMaster University

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Introduction

"Who is the head of your family?" is a meaningful phrase to most people in our society, and it is a phrase used in a common-sense way by people to refer to what a sociologist might call authority relationships within a family. In this paper we report a sociological investigation of the social fact that many families have heads in this common-sense way, emphasizing the importance of family headship in a sociology of aging. We will show that family headship clearly exists in a majority of contemporary families, with recognizable duties or activities attached to the position, and recognizable patterns of position occupancy and changes in occupancy, from generation to generation.

Family headship has not, to our knowledge, been systematically investigated in the sociology of the family. However, in an informal treatment, Howard (1978:268) remarks that "...good families have a chief"; and Miller (1965:78) has observed that it is difficult for a person to remain the "head of the family" following retirement. Canadian Gallup polls (Gallup Poll of Canada, 1966, 1981) periodically survey Canadian opinion on the question of who should be "top boss" in the family. The notion of headship in the family is approached through studies of family power and decision-making (e.g., Gillespie, 1971; Hill et al., 1970:19); and in recent feminist literature on patriarchy (e.g., Hartmann, 1976, Zaretsky, 1977).

Our own approach is to directly inquire about the existence within families of a position referred to as "head of the family"; and we rely on an interview respondent's ability to talk meaningfully in these terms. Our preliminary research question in this area was to ascertain the generality of "head of the family" as an everyday concept. We will show that the concept has wide generality.

Methodology

This research is part of a larger study, the Generational Relations and Succession Project,[1] in which we have gathered information from an equal number of men and women in Hamilton and Stoney Creek, Ontario, and from members of their families. Interviews[2] were conducted with a stratified random sample of 464 respondents over age 40 (one-third being over age 69) concerning basic dimensions of family structure, interaction and exchange patterns; but in addition to these issues, we inquired about a number of positions in a family division of labour encompassing the multi-generational family. Kinkeeping, described in another paper at this conference (Rosenthal, Marshall and Synge, 1981) is one such family position, and headship is another.

To ascertain whether or not a position of head of family existed in a respondent's family, we asked:

> Now, thinking of your side of the family as including yourself, your spouse and children, and your parents and grandparents--whichever of these people are still alive, is there anyone who is thought of as "head of the family" on your side of the family?

Note that the respondent was asked to reply in terms of the lineage: a spouse and ascendant and descendant kin on his or her side of the family. Interviewers accepted as a meaningful and codeable reply to this question, "respondent does not understand the term 'head of the family' or claims not to think in these terms". Only 2% of respondents were coded in this way. This fact, together with the social patterning of responses discussed in this paper, convinces us that the "head of the family" is a significant, though little-researched, social phenomenon.

Prevalence of the Head of the Family

Two-thirds of the people in this study said there was a person who was currently considered the head of their side of the family (See Table 1).

Table 1 About Here

Respondents who said there was no present head were asked a second question.

> Was there ever a time when someone was thought of as the head of the family on your side of the family?

Another sixteen percent of the respondents answered this question affirmatively.

In all, then, four-fifths of the respondents in the random sample in this study said that someone is now or used to be the head of their family. We infer from these data that the position of "head of the family" exists or has existed in the families of these respondents.

Responsibilities and Activities of the Head of the Family

If a respondent said there was or had been a head of the family, a follow-up question inquired as to why that person was considered to be head and how he or she came to be head of the family. Analysis of these "how" and "why" questions provides quite clear information about the responsibilities and activities of family heads.

Heads of families take on, or are given, family responsibilities. These may include: carrying financial responsibility for and supporting the family; handling financial affairs for various family members; taking charge in crisis situations; taking care of or taking responsibility for aging parents; giving advice and solving problems; making decisions, or having the final say in

decision-making; expressing interest in and concern for family members; and doing the planning and organizing for various family-related matters.

Many respondents referred to the relationship between headship and felt or attributed responsibility:

> I feel that I should take on the responsibility. (3080)[3]
>
> ****
>
> He shoulders the responsibility for us and for my mother. (6048)

A number of respondents mentioned that the person who supports the family financially has the right to be head.

> Because he pays the bills. (3065)
>
> ****
>
> Because he is the bread-winner...(4050)
>
> ****
>
> Because he provides the money. He is important. (4126)

In many examples, financial responsibility is one of several responsibilities of the head.

> I guess because I handle the financing and am consulted and generally have the final say. (3077)
>
> ****
>
> I have always handled the money and everything around the house, so the children came to me. (4069)

The head makes and is consulted about decisions. In some cases decision-making is autocratic. However, in the following example, the respondent conveys the feeling that this is the way things should be. The head has the legitimace authority to affect other family members in this way.

> What he said was law. He was the father and we all respected him. He was strict and he made the rules. (4099)

Even in families where other members participate in decision-making, the head is the one who makes the final decision or has the final say.

> My mother discusses major things with me and usually abides by my advice. The same with my family. We discuss things but I'm really the one that has the last word. (3116)
>
> ****

Advice-giving and decision-making are often related, as in the following example:

> We all turned to him for advice and he made decisions for us and provided for us. (6032)

In a few cases, respondents said someone was head through force. These individuals are able to impose their will on others but do not have the respect and affection that customarily accompany occupancy of the position. These quotations give no indication that the respondent sees position occupancy as in any way based on legitimate authority, despite the fact that the first two examples refer to the respondents' mothers.

> She is a strong person. She still can control us and seems to be able to get us to do things. (3057)
>
> ****
>
> She was a bully and a tyrant. No one else was there to talk back to her. (3019)

The man in the following example was talking about his sister, whom he named as head of his family.

> She is an aggressive person. Emma never loses an argument. (7117)

These preceding examples reveal that sometimes the activities of the head of the family include bossing other family members around. These heads are not particularly loved, and not necessarily respected. They hold their positions through domination, and this domination is perceived as such by others.

The head of the family takes charge in a crisis. This is implied in a number of responses which refer to the head's ability to stay calm or think clearly in emergencies. The broader implication is that one of the responsibilities or activities of the head of the family is to steer individual members or the family group through crises.

> He's thoughtful and in a financial way he is sound. He keeps calm in a crisis and is not an erratic person. (4081)
>
> ****
>
> I trust him and I have confidence in him. He can handle things clear headedly in emergencies. (4082)

One of the most important responsibilities that heads assume is caring for a parent. This may mean providing a home for a parent, as in the following cases.

> Because Mother lived with him and he looked after her. (5041)
>
> ****
>
> She provides a home for me and is my only child. (6011)

Such parent-caring by the head may be related to the parent's declining health.

> He was a priest and he looked after my mother when she was an invalid. (6075)

Parent-caring may be related to the death of the other parent.

> Since my father died, Mother mainly just had me. In the last year, Robert (the respondent's brother) has come round to helping Mom. When Dad died, I looked after everything. (3115)

Sometimes the activities of the head resemble those described for the kinkeeper (Rosenthal, Marshall and Synge, 1981). These positions are both conceptually and empirically distinct, but there are occasions when both are

occupied by the same incumbent.

In the following examples, the "mother role" is mentioned as an aspect of headship. The implication is that heads do what mothers do, be this kinkeeping or nurturing or advising. In fact, the sister named as head was also said to be the kinkeeper in this family.

> She took over the mother role after my mother died. (5064)

In the next example, too, the mother was considered head because she kept the family together.

> My father died. She was widowed quite young. She did the things that had to be done, kept us from falling apart, helping, listening. (6031)

In summary, the head of the family is a position with many responsibilities and activities, involving financial and emotional support, crisis resolution, parent-caring, advice and decision-making and kinkeeping.

Who is the Head of the Family?

When we asked who is the head of the family, respondents tended to name themselves or, if a female, their husband. A few named both themselves and their spouse as head of the family. In all, almost three-fourths of persons named as heads were either the respondent or respondent's spouse, or both.[4] Self-designations and other-designations were patterned in socially meaningful ways which suggest that this is not, however, simply a case of the individual claiming power.

Table 2 about here

Age and Sex of Occupant

The great majority (three-fifths) of persons named as head of the family were male. This pattern holds true when we look at self-designations. Males were almost twice as likely as females to name themselves as head of the family (35% vs. 18%). However, a substantial minority of women did name themselves as heads, and self-designation increased with age for women while it decreased significantly for men.

Table 3 about here

The older women who designated themselves as family heads tended to be women who were not currently married. We found that in the 65 and over age group, women who were not currently married were more likely than their married counterparts to say they were head of the family (Pearson's R.=221, Sign.=.011).

To ascertain the approximate age of family heads, we have examined the cases of self-designations. This analysis showed that the head of the family is a position men occupy in earlier mature years, while women enter it late in life.

The median age of male occupancy was between 50 and 59, with the peak in self-designations falling between the ages of 45 and 54. In the lineage, these are years of authority for men. For men, there is an overall decline with age in the tendency to be head of the family, while the pattern for women is quite the opposite. The median age at which women designated themselves was 70 to 74. From this, we infer that, with age, women are increasingly likely to be head of the family.

The same inference may be made from designations of mothers. Mothers tend to be heads after fathers die, making these women quite old when they enter the position.

To sum up, when self-designations are used as an indicator of age of heads, it appears that male occupants tend to be quite young and female occupants to be elderly. Men are heads while children are still dependent and at home, and as the nest empties. Women become heads, if at all, in their later years, long after children have left home, and after husbands have died. The death of the former head was, in fact, the most commonly mentioned reason the present head had assumed occupancy. Marriage was also frequently given as the occasion on which the present head had taken over his or her responsibilities. These family life course changes, occasioned by death, marriage and also by birth, create vacancies in the headship position, or create new positions. The dynamics related to these family life course events result in men assuming headship at relatively young ages and women assuming headship, if at all, late in life.

Kinship Positions of Occupant

After self-designations, the next most important category from which family heads are named is the spouse. Many women named their husband as head, but very few men named their wives. Here again, then, we see the tendency for the position to be filled by a male.

Table 3 about here

Considering the rise of feminist ideology, we might expect women to protest against the male dominance in this position of authority, and thus to show a

tendency to name the couple as a kind of compromise solution. It is rather surprising, therefore, that men in every age group were more likely than women to name the married couple as head. A total of 13.4% of men but only 5% of women gave this response. It is also interesting that in the oldest group of women, those over 70 years of age, not one woman named the married couple as past or present head. Those few older women who still had husbands might have been expected to name the couple as head, since studies have suggested that in post-retirement years the couple becomes more democratic in some respects. For example, research has indicated that after retirement, husbands and wives share in the performance of household tasks (Ballweg, 1967; Kerckhoff, 1964) and move from an emphasis on instrumental behaviour to a new emphasis on expressive behaviour (Lipman, 1960, 1961). That is, the traditional sexual division of labour in the Parsonian sense breaks down or becomes blurred in these years, and this is thought to be related to an increase in power for wives in this period (Troll, 1971; Feldman, 1964). Nonetheless, these elderly, married women did not feel headship was vested in the married couple.

Parents were named as heads in about one-tenth of the cases. However, when availability of parents is controlled for, 30.8% of the respondents who had a living parent and named a head said a parent was head of the family.

There is male dominance in the position with respect to parents. Although in absolute numbers more mothers were named than fathers, this merely reflects the fact that many more respondents had surviving mothers than fathers. When we controlled for availability, fathers were more likely to be named than mothers. Of respondents who named a head of the family and who had a living father, 33.3% said their father was head, while for those with a living mother the figure was only 21.5% When both parents were living, respondents named fathers twice as often as mothers.

Another indication of this father-dominance appears in the data on who respondents said was the head of the family before the present occupant took over. As previous heads, fathers were named two and one-half times as frequently as mothers.

Finally, more than half of those who named their mother as present head, said their father was the head before that.

In summary, although in absolute numbers more mothers than fathers were named as present heads, the position is one normally occupied by a man, in this case a father. When the father dies, the position often passes to the mother if she is still living.

Siblings and other extended family members were said to be family heads in only one-tenth of the cases. It is surprising, perhaps, that these individuals were named at all, since they were not mentioned as being eligible for this position in the phrasing of the question as it was presented to respondents.

Children, who were eligible to be named, were designated head of the family in less than one-twentieth of the cases. This is an important finding given that one-third of our respondents were aged 70+, and one-third aged 55-69. Respondents certainly see headship as having moved down from their parents to themselves or others in their generation, and they frequently name a child as future head. However, only twelve respondents felt that headship had already moved from their own generation down to one of their children. A brief deviant case analysis of these respondents will lead us into the question of the dynamics of succession, from generation to generation, of familial headship.

A Deviant Case Analysis of Headship Succession

The twelve respondents who designated a child as head of the family included seven men and five women. All these respondents were over the age of 55, and most were over 65. Three quarters were widowed, and most were retired.

These respondents were not characterized by poor health. Only three of the twelve said they had a health problem that stood in the way "a great deal" of their doing things they wanted to do. However, poor health might well be one contributing factor to seeing a child as head. A respondent whose present health posed no problems indicated that a past health crisis played an important role in the passing of headship to the child: "I became very ill when my son was age 16. He has been helping as head ever since" (7057). A female respondent employing the implicit assumption that this is a male position, said her son was now the head "Because his father died and he is the only male and healthy" (8010).

One widowed woman had moved from her farm to an apartment in the city, probably after her husband died. This type of move, quite common among elderly people who move to be closer to children (Troll, 1971), may well involve a move toward increased social and emotional dependency on children as old social ties are left behind. This particular woman said her son was head because:

> His sister gets his advice. He can straighten things out and talk things over. After I moved to my apartment from the farm he always dropped in to see me. One could depend on him. (8003)

Of the twelve children named as heads, eight were first-born sons, two were the eldest male children, and the remaining two were second-eldest males. It is clearly first-born sons upon whom this mantle falls.

These sons were often said to be heads because of their business acumen or intelligence. For example:

> He is a leader and successful in business. He has good leadership qualities and the family turns to him. (5009)
>
> ****
>
> He is the only son. He is a business consultant and seems to assume the role of head. (5022)

Eight of these twelve child-heads were said to occupy the position because they had business knowledge or success, a reason given for only one-sixth of all family heads.

This consideration of the very small number of cases in which a respondent named a child as present head of the family has provided insight into possible correlates of this unusual occurrence. Respondents who designated a child always named a son, almost always a first-born or eldest male. These sons were far more likely to be considered to have special financial or business qualifications than was true for all heads taken as a group.

The respondents who named a child as head tended to be older, although not dramatically so. Both sexes were about equally represented in this group, most were widowed, and retired. From this analysis we may infer that "premature" assumption of headship by a child is most likely to ensue when the parent, father or mother, becomes widowed, when there is an eldest son among the children to take on this responsibility, and when that son is financially skilled or successful.

We may now turn to a more general consideration of the passing of headship from generation to generation.

Generational Location and Succession of Headship

The head of the family is usually someone from the respondent's own generation, and this tendency increases with the age of the respondents (see Table 4). Whereas about four-fifths of respondents in the younger age group

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Table 4 about here

---

named a generational peer, about nine-tenths of the older respondents did so. Furthermore, respondents were more inclined to name an older generation occupant of this position than a younger generation one.

These data indicate that when people feel there is a head of the family they usually see this responsibility as vested in their own generation. Naming an older generation head does not necessarily have negative connotations for the respondent, who is in the position of "waiting in the wings", next in line for the assumption of family authority and responsibility.

However, there are negative connotations when a respondent says a child or someone in a younger generation is now the head of the family. These respondents are saying, in effect, that history has moved on, and that they have stepped aside to make way for the next generation. Most people, therefore, cling to the perception that their own generation is in charge.

These data show that generational succession in headship occurs; this is clear from the decreasing tendency with age to name an older generation occupant as head and an increasing tendency to name a younger generation occupant.[5] Equally clear, though, and hardly surprising, is the implication that respondents themselves are reluctant to recognize or perceive succession as having moved on from them to their younger offspring or relations. Practically to the end of life, most respondents continue to see headship as located in their own generation.

Agreement Between Parents and Children on Existence and Occupancy of the Position

We look next at how respondents' children replied to the question asking who is the head of the family, to add to our understanding about how family members perceive the allocation of a family authority and responsibility and how this perception changes with age.

Of the 506 children who returned the mailed questionnaire, 44% said someone was head of their family. Table 5 lists the lineage members named as head by these children and shows how the person identified as head varies with the age of the child. In the youngest group of children, fathers are overwhelmingly named as heads. Overall, parents or grandparents are named 90% of the time.

In the decade of their thirties, when children are generally married, established in occupations, and having their own children, although there are continuing high numbers who identify a parent as head, there is a decrease in these identifications, while spouse designations begin to increase.

Table 5 about here

As these children become middle-aged, a surprising number continue to name parents, showing an obvious preference for fathers. However, the overall decrease in naming parents is unmistakable, and is counter-balanced by a large increase in children naming themselves or their spouse as head.

As people move through the early phases of the family life course in their own families of procreation they generally still perceive a parent to be the family head. However, by the time they are middle-aged, this tendency is on the wane. There is a shifting of authority in the lineage, even when parents are still living, indicating a weakening of the hold on headship by the aging parents and an accession to the position by those in middle age.

A more detailed analysis of succession, which can only be briefly mentioned here,[6] is based on 155 cases -- one-third of our respondents -- who identified a specific head of the family for the past, the present, and the future. Transition sequences, when analyzed for kinship position with respect to our respondent as well as sex and generational location, show that the most common pattern of succession identified by men is from parent to self to child, with both the parent and the child most likely to be a male. Another frequent pattern is from male parent to self to spouse. A few male respondents named a grandparent as past head, a father as present head, and themselves as future

head. Female respondents most commonly said headship was passed from their parent (usually a father) to their husband, and would pass in the future to a child (usually a son). If women place themselves in this sequence of succession, this is usually succeeding the husband on his death, and to be followed by succession by a son. That is, there is evidence of a four position sequence from father to husband to wife to son, with the female acting as a kind of "regent", holding authority until the next eligible male can assume it.

Summary and Discussion

In this paper we have demonstrated that headship exists as a social fact within a majority of contemporary families. We have described a number of responsibilities and activities which make up the work done by heads of families. Occupancy of the position of family head has been shown to be systematically patterned in socially meaningful ways by sex and age, and by kinship position within the lineage. Finally, we have shown that headship passes from generation to generation, despite an apparent reluctance to give up the authority which headship entails.

These findings point to an important dynamic of both the individual and the family life course. Our data would suggest that traditional male-dominated authority patterns continue to characterize much of family life. In the long run, and typically, headship and its succession from generation to generation passes from male to male. Women are bystanders in this process, for the most part.

Life course events, such as the death of a family member, are major initiators of changes in headship; and changing health has its effects as well, particularly insofar as the assumption of a parent-caring role often brings with it recognition as being the head of the family. From the perspective of the older family member, passing on headship is a reflection of the loss of independence, and we have noted a reluctance to accept this loss.

But with the passing of years, life goes on in families, and important life course events lead to changes in the occupancy of family positions which themselves remain fairly stable. Marriage often creates new heads of families, being mentioned almost as frequently as the death of a family member as a time when a family head assumed this position.

We may finally note that our data provide a way of seeing that family members themselves view their families as having an underlying continuity that sustains them through time despite family change. People see their families as persisting over time and encompassing past, present and future generations. People see themselves as living in several family groupings simultaneously -- nuclear families, multi-generational lineages and larger family groups that include siblings, cousins and other relatives. The meanings and boundaries of these groupings change as people grow older; but our analysis has shown that the family group is tied together by common authority, held usually by the father, which continues to bind the members into a lineage unit despite separate households and progression through the life course.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Generational Relations and Succession Project (GRASP) is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada through grant no. 492-79-0073-R1. Additional support has been provided by the National Health Research Development Program of Health and Welfare Canada through a National Health Scientist award to Victor Marshall, and by the Office on Aging, McMaster University. Invaluable staff support has been provided by Brenda Nussey, and by Christine Davis and Margaret Denton of Social Data Research Ltd. We are particularly grateful to the many people who were interviewed or who completed questionnaires for the study.

2. To obtain 464 completions, we attempted to contact 1,081 persons, drawing new cases randomly as needed. Despite the fact that the population listing was the current year's property assessment tape, used for current property tax billings, we could not locate 117 persons, of whom 30 were known to be deceased and 68 known to have moved. This left 964 contacted persons, of whom 116, or 12%, were found to be ineligible for the study because they could not speak or write English well enough to be included (we did not provide translators). Subtracting language ineligibles leaves a total of 848 eligible contacted persons, from which base we calculate the following rates: 12% excluded because their own health was too poor or they were preoccupied with the ill health or death of another family member; 33% refusal; 55% completion. Streib (1980) has recently called attention to the "excluded 20%" of the aged -- particularly the very old -- who are not interviewed in community studies of the aged. Our study undoubtedly under-represents the bedfast and the very ill elderly, and only five cases were interviewed in nursing homes or homes for the aged. This study therefore represents community-dwelling persons who, even if many are quite old, tend to be in reasonably good health. The social class spread of the sample is indicated by the fact that 25% earned $8,000 or less, while 22% earned $25,000 or more, yearly. More than half the respondents listed British as their main ancestry, and the next largest groups (Irish, Italian and German) were listed by 7% or less of respondents.

3. The numbers following verbatim responses are identification numbers of individual respondents. The first digit codes an age and sex category as follows: 3=males age 40-54; 4=females age 40-54; 5=males age 55-69 6=females age 55-69; 7=males age 70+; 8=females age 70+. These were the categories within which we drew a random sample.

4. The finding that three-quarters of the respondents named either themselves, their spouse, or both themselves and their spouse as head of the family raises the concern that respondents may have answered the question in terms of whom they considered head of the household, despite the fact that the phrasing of the question directed them to choose a head from all living, vertically-linked generations in the lineage. However, our analysis has convinced us that most respondents were indeed thinking of the lineage when they named a head of the family. A content analysis of open-ended questions showed that only about one-third of respondents under age 70 and one-tenth of those 70+ may have phrased their answers in terms of the household group; the majority clearly answered in terms of the broader family. Further strength for the argument that respondents thought beyond the confines of

household is found in the fact that so many (87%) respondents who named a present head could also name the previous ehead, and many (59%) could name the future head of the family. These changes from past to present to future usually involved a transition in headship to a member of a younger generation. It would be impossible for people to describe these transitions unless they thought beyond their immediate households.

5. Of course these patterns are very strongly related to availability due to death of older family members and maturing of younger ones.

6. For a detailed analysis of the patterns of succession of headship, see Rosenthal (1981).

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TABLE 1

Percent of Respondents Who Say There Is a Head of the Family, by Age and Sex

	Sex of Respondent	Age of Respondent 40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80+	All
	Males	73.9	94.7	83.3	64.7	90.0	53.3	66.7	40.7	50.0	68.9
	Females	85.0	73.0	88.6	73.3	46.2	70.0	63.3	44.0	53.8	67.1
	All	79.1	84.1	86.2	68.8	65.2	62.9	65.0	42.3	52.5	67.9
N	Males	23	19	30	34	20	15	30	27	14	212
	Females	20	25	35	30	26	20	30	25	26	237
	All	43	44	65	64	46	35	60	52	40	449

Missing Observations = 15

Men: Pearson's R = -.257, Sign. = .000

Women: Pearson's R = -.235, Sign. = .000

TABLE 2

Sex and Relationship to Respondent of Persons Named as Head of the Family

Relationship to Respondent	Percent of Heads Who Are:		
	Male	Female	Uncodable for Sex
Respondent	24.8	13.2	
Spouse	23.5	1.6	
Couple (Respondent and Spouse)			10.9
Parent or Grandparent	4.3	6.9	
Sibling	2.6	3.3	1.6
Child or Child-in-law	3.7		.6
Other*	.6	.9	.9
	59.7	25.9	14.0
N	182	80	43

*Includes aunts, uncles, cousin, other.

TABLE 3

Percent of All Respondents Who Designate Themselves as Head of the Family by Age and Sex

Sex of Respondent	40-44	45-59	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80%	All
Males	34.8	57.9	43.8	31.4	38.1	18.8	40.0	18.5	33.3	35.3
Females	5.0	10.7	8.6	16.1	11.5	19.0	29.0	24.0	32.1	17.6
All	20.9	29.8	25.4	24.2	23.4	18.9	34.4	21.2	32.6	25.9
N Males	23	19	32	35	21	16	30	27	15	218
Females	20	28	35	31	26	21	31	26	28	245
All	43	47	67	66	47	37	61	52	43	463

Missing Observations = 1

Men: Pearson's R = -.121, Sign. = .037

Women: Pearson's R = .217, Sign. = .000

Sex: Pearson's R = .198, Sign. = .000

TABLE 4

Generational Location of Head, by Age of Respondent

Age of Respondent	Younger Generation than Respondent %	Same Generation as Respondent %	Older Generation than Respondent %
70+ (N = 77)	10.3	88.3	1.2
55-69 (N = 97)	5.1	85.5	9.2
40-54 (N = 126)	0	77.7	22.2

Uncodable = 5
Chi Square = 30.67, df = 2, Sign. = .001
Cramer's V = .23

TABLE 5

Family Member Named as Head of the Family by Respondents' Children, by Age of Child

Family Member Named as Head of the Family by Child	Age of Child 18-29	30-39	40-59
	%	%	%
Mother	9.8	24.5	16.6
Father	75.0	55.7	40.4
Grandparent	5.3	0	0
Spouse	5.3	16.3	26.1
Self	4.4	3.2	16.6
N	112	61	42

Exclusions = 7 (2 uncodable, 1 great uncle, and 4 siblings)

Note: 44.2% of respondents' children who returned mailed questionnaires said someone was currently head of the family.